



Assistant Wardens' Role Description (Appointed Members)

The Trust's governing body is styled the Court of Wardens and Assistants of Rochester Bridge in the County of Kent ("the Court"). There are twelve members of the Court and all are unpaid charity trustees. Six members are recruited from the community by the Trust, latterly by public advertisement and competitive interview. The remaining six members are nominated by the local authorities that cover the areas which had historic responsibility for Rochester Bridge from Anglo Saxon times until 1908.

In summary, the Trust's charitable purposes are as follows, in order of priority:

- (i) to provide and maintain the two road bridges and their approaches and the Service Bridge at Rochester which are owned by the Trust;
- (ii) to promote other crossings over, under or across the River Medway;
- (iii) to promote other charitable purposes in the UK, primarily in the County of Kent.

The Trust's activities under the third object are determined by its Grants and Charitable Expenditure Policy. This gives priority to the following types of project:

- promotion of study of civil engineering and related disciplines;
- education, research and conservation in the fields of construction (particularly related to bridges), Kent history and agriculture;
- projects to preserve, to improve, to develop further understanding of the history of the River Medway and its crossings; and
- conservation of the historically important fabric of heritage buildings.

The Trust's income is derived from its extensive property estate and financial investments. The Trust has significant land and property holdings in Kent, Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire and West Sussex and continues to grow its portfolio.

Person Specification

The Court aims to achieve a range of skills in its members, which are relevant to the Trust's work.

The most important qualities for members of the Court are a genuine interest in the Trust's work and history and a commitment to pay a full part in its work.

The Court is seeking an Assistant Warden with knowledge and experience in at least one of the following areas: insurance, actuarial valuation, finance or investment management.

Role Summary

As trustees, members of the Court have responsibility for directing the affairs of the Trust, and ensuring that it is solvent, well-run, and delivering the charitable outcomes for the benefit of the public for which it has been set up.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Using reasonable care and skill in their work as trustees, using their personal skills and experience as needed;
- Ensuring that the Trust complies with charity law, the requirements of the Charity Commission as regulator (notably producing an annual report and audited accounts);

- Ensuring that the charity does not breach any of the requirements or rules set out in its governing document and that it remains true to the charitable purposes set out there;
- Ensuring that charitable funds are used reasonably and only in furtherance of the charity's objects and for the public benefit;
- Complying with the requirements of other legislation and regulations which govern the activities of the charity;
- Acting with prudence by avoiding undertaking activities that might place the charity's endowment, funds, assets or reputation at undue risk;
- Taking responsibility for personal development with the support of officers and colleagues to ensure that knowledge and understanding of the Trust's activities is sufficient to make informed decisions.

The Trust employs highly experienced professional officers and retains solicitors and auditors to advise the members on their responsibilities and assist with compliance.

Members of the Court must act with integrity, and avoid any personal conflicts of interest or loyalty in accordance with the Trust's Conflict of Interest and Loyalty Policy.

Commitment required

Court meetings are held four times a year, usually lasting about 4 hours and taking place on Monday mornings. All members of the Court are expected to attend although occasional apologies are acceptable. A luncheon follows the Court meeting to which guests are invited and members are encouraged to attend.

There are four standing business committees. The main committees, Bridges, Resources, Property and Education, Grants and Archives meet quarterly, usually on Tuesday or Thursday mornings. All members of the Court are expected to take a place on one committee. The member appointed following this recruitment exercise will be required to take a place on the Resources Committee.

A range of charitable and social events also take place, usually about 6 per year, generally in the evening, which members are encouraged to attend. When a grants programme is in operation then members are sometimes asked to take a particular interest in one organisation and meet them perhaps once or twice a year during the funded project.

Members are expected to read papers in advance of the formal meetings they attend and respond to email and other communications on matters of urgency (maybe 5-6 times a year).

Members' Training

All new members receive induction training from the Bridge Clerk (Chief Executive). If required, members also have the opportunity to attend free training on the role of charity trustees and this is strongly encouraged. Training events on key issues facing the Trust are delivered by professional advisors and external facilitators as required.

Eligibility

No person may act as a trustee if they are disqualified under the Charities Act 2011, including if they have an unspent conviction involving dishonesty or deception; are bankrupt or have entered into a formal arrangement with a creditor; or have been removed as a company director or charity trustee because of wrongdoing.